

Amendments to the Specification

Please delete paragraph [035].

Please delete paragraphs [018], [020], [049], [051], [056], [058], [062], [064], [065], [066], [067], [071], [073], [074], [076], [097], [105], and replace them with the substitute paragraphs shown below, in which changes are indicated by strikethrough, brackets and/or underscoring.

[018] Figure 1 is a longitudinal cross-sectional view of a main body 2 of an exhaust muffler system ~~[[100]]~~, according to a first embodiment of the present invention.

[020] Figure 3(a) is a longitudinal cross-sectional view of the regular spark arrester 18 for use in the exhaust muffler system ~~[[100]]~~ of the first embodiment during public road travel.

[049] The exhaust muffler system ~~[[100]]~~ of the first embodiment includes a set of three component members, including an exhaust muffler main body 2, and two interchangeable spark arresters 18, 32 that can be selectively attached to and detached from the main body 2. The three components of the system ~~[[100]]~~ can be seen together in Figure 15. The muffler system ~~[[100]]~~ includes both a regular, non-racing spark arrester 18 for use in public road travel, and a racing spark arrester 31. The two types of spark arrester can be interchanged on the exhaust muffler body 2, according to the contemplated use of the vehicle.

[051] Figure 1 is a longitudinal cross-section of a main body portion 2 of the exhaust muffler system ~~[[100]]~~, according to the first embodiment hereof. In Fig. 1, the outer

shell of the main body 2 of the exhaust muffler system [[100]] includes a cylindrical central body part 3, a conical front cover 4, and a rear plate 5 having a large opening at a central part thereof. The central body part 3 also includes an outer body plate 6, an inner body plate 7 disposed inside the outer body plate, and heat-tolerant noise-absorbing material 8, such as glass wool, etc., filling in between the respective inner and outer body plates 6, 7.

[056] In the regular configuration of the exhaust system [[100]], as depicted in Figure 2, the bulkheads 14, 15, the communicating pipes 16, 17, and the regular spark arrester 18 cooperate to define an exhaust flow path FP through the main body. The flow path FP is illustrated by a number of arrows in Figure 2, and passes through the second bulkhead 15 three times before exiting from the tail pipe 19, as will be further detailed herein.

[058] Figure 3(a) is a longitudinal cross-sectional view of the regular spark arrester 18 for use in the regular configuration 1A for the exhaust muffler system [[100]]. Fig. 3(b) is a rear plan view of the regular spark arrester.

[062] With reference to Figure 2, in the regular configuration 1A of the exhaust muffler system [[100]], exhaust gas from the internal combustion engine (not shown) gushing into the main body 2 of the exhaust muffler 1, via the introduction pipe 9, is exhausted to the open air by the following route. After exiting the introduction pipe 9, the exhaust gas flows through the perforated partition plate 13, and then passes through the first expansion chamber C1, first communicating pipe 16, second expansion chamber C2, reverses direction and flows through the second communicating pipe 17, third expansion

chamber C3, stainless steel wire mesh 27, gas-introducing small holes 26 and outwardly through the tail pipe 19.

[064] In the regular configuration 1A of this exhaust muffler system [[100]] for public road travel, the gas flow has a so-called "three-pass" structure, where the gas flow passes through the second bulkhead 15 three times via the first communicating pipe 16, second communicating pipe 17, and the tail pipe 19. This structure improves sound-abating effects by elongating the gas flow path.

[065] Figure 4 is a longitudinal cross-sectional view of the exhaust muffler 1 in the racing configuration 1B thereof, according to the first embodiment of the system [[100]].

[066] It is possible to improve output of the internal combustion engine, during use of the exhaust muffler system [[100]] in racing, simply by detaching the regular spark arrester 18. However, when there is no spark arrester, sparks and soot are simply discharged into the open air, and this is disfavored from an environmental point of view.

[067] In the racing configuration 1B of the exhaust muffler system [[100]] of this embodiment, the regular spark arrester 18 is disconnected and removed from the main body 2, and the racing spark arrester 31 is installed in its place. The dimensions of the racing spark arrester 31 are short in the axial direction. Therefore, in the racing configuration 1B, a central through-hole 14a for the first bulkhead 14 and a central through-hole 15a for the second bulkhead 15 are opened up.

[071] In the racing configuration 1B of the exhaust muffler system [[100]] according to the first embodiment, shown in Fig. 4, exhaust gas from the internal combustion engine, (not shown) gushing into the main body 2 of the exhaust muffler 1 via the introduction pipe 9, is exhausted to the open air by passing linearly through the muffler 1 from front to back.

[073] The central through-holes 14a, 15a have large diameters and permit the gas to advance in a straight line and therefore present little resistance to the gas flowing out. Further, the tail pipe 32 is also short with a large diameter and therefore also presents little resistance to the gas flowing out. For these reasons, it will be understood that back pressure exerted by the muffler 1 in the racing configuration 1B is less than the back pressure in the regular configuration 1A, and accordingly, the power output of the internal combustion engine is improved by the racing configuration 1B of the exhaust muffler system [[100]], equipped with the racing spark arrester 31, and a condition appropriate for racing is attained.

[074] When the exhaust muffler system [[100]] of the first embodiment is assembled for the regular configuration 1A (Fig. 2), of the first to third expansion chambers, the first expansion chamber C1, at maximum pressure, and the third expansion chamber C3 at minimum pressure are located next to each other. Sound-abating effects decrease sharply if gas leaks between the chambers.

[076] Figure 6 to Fig. 8 are longitudinal cross-sectional views of the muffler 1, for illustrating various proposed seal structures that can be applied between the first

expansion chamber C1 and the third expansion chamber C3 in the regular configuration 1A of the exhaust muffler system [[100]] of the first embodiment. Portions in Figures 6-8 corresponding to portions shown in Fig. 2 are given the same numerals. The drawings are slightly simplified. The perforated metal partition plate 13 is not the object of discussion and is therefore omitted from these drawings.

[097] There is no central through-hole at the first bulkhead at the exhaust muffler 41 of this embodiment. The gas leakage seal structure (Fig. 6 to Fig. 8) provided in order to prevent gas from leaking between the first expansion chamber C1 and the third expansion chamber C3 in the regular configuration 1A of the exhaust muffler system [[100]] of the first embodiment can therefore be omitted and the structure is simplified accordingly.

[105] Further, in the regular configuration 1A of the exhaust muffler system [[100]] of the first embodiment, leakage of gas or sound into a neighboring expansion chamber does not occur due to the seal structure shown in Fig. 6 to Fig. 8 and silencing is therefore improved. Further, the tail pipe has a slide structure that permits extension and retraction thereof. Thermal expansion is therefore accommodated, there is little fatigue even with repeated expansion and retraction, and durability is improved.